

REMARKS

Claims 1-14 are pending in the present application. Claims 1, 7, 8 and 14 have been amended herewith. Reconsideration of the claims is respectfully requested.

Applicants would initially like to thank the Examiner for taking the time to conduct a telephonic interview with Applicants' representative on 10/27/04. While no agreement was reached, Applicants' representative urged that none of the cited references teaches a plurality of partitions, and that the cited Forsman reference should be excluded under 35 U.S.C. 103(c).

I. 35 U.S.C. § 103, Obviousness

A. The Examiner rejected Claims 1-4, 6-11, 13 and 14 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Forsman et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,742,139) in view of Chen (U.S. Patent No. 5,913,064). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Applicants respectfully submit that the cited Forsman reference is excluded from being a proper reference for an obviousness rejection, pursuant to 35 U.S.C. 103(c). The present application was filed after November 29, 1999, and the Forsman reference and the present patent application were, at the time the invention was made, owned by or subject to an obligation of assignment to, the same person (the common assignee being International Business Machines Corporation).

Therefore, the rejection of Claims 1-4, 6-11, 13 and 14 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 has been overcome.

B. The Examiner rejected Claims 5 and 12 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Forsman et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,742,139) in view of Chen (U.S. Patent No. 5,913,064) in further view of Tremblay (U.S. Patent No. 6,212,604). This rejection is respectfully traversed for similar reasons to those given above with respect to Claims 1-4, 6-11, 13 and 14.

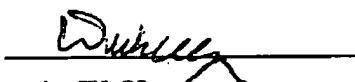
Therefore, the rejection of Claims 5 and 12 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 has been overcome.

II. Conclusion

It is respectfully urged that the subject application is patentable over the cited references and is now in condition for allowance. The Examiner is invited to call the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number if in the opinion of the Examiner such a telephone conference would expedite or aid the prosecution and examination of this application.

DATE: 11/2/03

Respectfully submitted,



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